



Project Hoosier

September 2003

INSIDE

Getting Creative
Grants and Bonds and aren't the only answer

Click Me! Click Me!
Check these web sites for grants and other funding information

Successful Sites
Stories about how other cities and states have paid for interoperability

Focus on Funding

For most Hoosiers, nothing is more important than public safety. Recent terrorist, criminal and weather crises in the nation and state have emphasized the undisputed need for cooperative communication between Indiana public safety personnel agencies.

Radios are the virtual lifeline that connect public safety personnel to each other and to other agencies should they need backup. Yet, too often, local and state agencies are still relying on outdated and decades-old communications systems. In addition, most public safety agencies have stand-alone systems -- thus creating islands of equipment that cannot connect with anyone else anywhere outside of their profession or jurisdiction. In a crisis or emergency, public safety personnel are isolated and exposed to greater danger.

That's the bad news. The good news is that Indiana is poised to provide Hoosiers with the protection they need and deserve.

Project Hoosier SAFE-T is building the backbone of interoperability by providing towers, technology and maintenance for a statewide communications system. This is a huge safety and security investment for all Hoosier public safety personnel and citizens.

Unlike most states that are building interoperable communications systems, Indiana has provided funding to build out the framework and to offer it with no user fees to local governments and agencies.

But even with this sizeable incentive, subscribers still must buy their user equipment, such as radios and consoles. In these cash-strapped times, that task can seem insurmountable. In fact, local and safety officials have identified funding as the primary barrier to interoperability.

Despite this challenge, many jurisdictions across the state and country have met the funding quest with creativity and innovation. This newsletter will bring you some of these community funding stories as well as other funding tools and resources from the Project Hoosier SAFE-T staff and other state and national safety

sources.

Project Hoosier SAFE-T is truly a cooperative effort. The simple practice of sharing resources and infrastructure for interoperability between responders has made our plan a model for others across the nation.



Saving Lives Saving Money



The Money Tree?

How Project Hoosier SAFE-T is funded

ther states may be further along in providing a state-wide interoperable communications system, but Indiana, through Project Hoosier SAFE-T, provides an excellent example of coordination, partnership and funding success. With no user fees, maintenance or construction costs to opt in to the system, local communities have an exceptional opportunity to save money while increasing their capacity to save lives.

Interoperability has long been cited by public safety professionals as one of, if not the most urgent public safety issue. Yet it took a tragedy -- the 9-11 terrorist attack -- to free up funds to get the project moving.

Although the State Police provided \$7.5 million in seed money to start the project in 1997, it wasn't until March 2002 that the Indiana General Assembly provided a funding mechanism for the system build-out. The legislature passed a bill dedicating \$1.25 out of existing BMV fees to fund Project Hoosier SAFE-T.



This dedication of money provided the lifeblood that finally moved the project, which had been in planning stages for years, off paper and into reality.

Project Hoosier SAFE-T also gets funding through federal sources. The Department of Homeland Security, established after the terrorist attacks, is distributing grants through

its Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP). The ODP awarded Indiana \$11 million for fiscal year 2003. \$1 million of this money was earmarked for Project Hoosier SAFE-T. The 9-11 terrorist attacks also forced federal agencies to focus on public safety issues. Project Hoosier SAFE-T has received grants through the U.S. Departments of Justice and Transportation and from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Project Hoosier SAFE-T is using this money to build the backbone of the communications system across the state. Cost per county varies widely. Existing frequency availability, existing tower sites and terrain all play a role in determining how much it costs to get ready for interoperability. Project Hoosier SAFE-T has estimated that it will cost \$41 mil-

lion to build 55 sites now under construction.

The Cost to Local Communities

Perhaps the biggest strength of the Indiana project is that it charges no user fees to agencies wishing to join the system, thus saving local communities millions more dollars. No infrastructure or maintenance costs and no user fees -- it all adds up to significant savings for local entities.

To keep costs down even further, Indiana has contracted with Motorola for a discount. The state has also locked in costs for equipment. Motorola has guaranteed no increases in equipment prices through 2007.

"Perhaps the biggest strength of the Indiana project is that it charges no user fees, thus saving local communities millions more dollars."

How Do Other Midwest States Fund Interoperability?

Indiana has joined with surrounding states to form the Midwest Public Safety Communications Consortium (MPSCC) in a historic effort to tie together each state's statewide communications system to the extent possible. Following is a summary of the funding sources for the other MPSCC members:

Michigan issued a state bond and used general fund money that was designated for the communications needs of the state police. The state also charges user fees to recover some of the costs of the system build out; **Illinois'** STARCOM trunked voice system is a fee-for-service system. Federal, state, local municipalities and other state agencies have the option of purchasing equipment and services from four contracts established by the State of Illinois; **Ohio** began planning and funding the state's Multi Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS) in 1993. Allocated funds throughout the years have built the system infrastructure, and the state charges user fees. **Kentucky** funded their UHF Multicast Digital solution through general fund appropriations.

How to Ask for Funds

Planning to go to your city/county government officials to ask for money?

Project Hoosier SAFE-T has materials -- powerpoint presentations, videos, brochures and other media -- that can help describe the dire need for equipment upgrades and the huge savings that can be realized by combining resources through the SAFE-T system. Our friendly field staff, Dave Vice and Steve Skinner, are also available to attend meetings to help describe the project. Just call 317.233.8624 or visit our website, <http://www.state.in.us/ipsc/safe-t>.

It's also important to talk up public safety issues in your community. Unlike the general awareness that goes along with requests for education and highways, funding for public safety radio communications is largely misunderstood by governing bodies and the public at large. Some suggestions on how to accomplish this goal

Start with a well defined goal statement -- State the compelling safety issues. Use numbers -- the number of safety personnel affected, the savings the county will realize, the number of sites and where they will be located, the equipment involved and purchase amount.

Speak with one voice -- Try to get all affected public safety agencies involved as partners. Write a letter (based on your goal statement) and get as many representatives from your county's affected agencies to sign the letter. Send it to your elected officials/policymakers prior to any budgetary request.

Letters to the Editor -- Have local police, firefighters, EMS and other affected public safety

The Local Angle Creativity, Cooperation is Key

Despite the significant savings provided by Project Hoosier SAFE-T, local communities still must purchase their user equipment. Finding funds for this financial expense in a cash-strapped economy can seem overwhelming, at best.

But many local entities across the state and nation have met this challenge, not only through traditional funding methods but also by exploring other funding methods.

In Indiana, most of the local government agencies that have signed up to join Hoosier Project SAFE-T have funded their equipment purchases with money from their operating budgets.

Johnson County, however, sold bonds to fund their equipment purchase. After first surveying the county public safety agencies for existing and needed equipment, they established a budget of about \$5.5 million and approached the Johnson County Council. The council held hearings, approved the process and issued general obligation bonds. The entire process took about 3 months.

Some local governments raise specific taxes or apportion percentages of taxes specifically to fund public safety needs. For example, Las Vegas, Nevada uses \$0.05 for every \$100.00 of

assessed value for public safety needs. This raises almost \$1 million a year, which allowed the city to establish the 911 system and now is allowing them to build an 800 MHz communications system with neighboring Clarke County.

Local governments can impose surcharges on services. An oft-used surcharge for local public safety agencies is the 911 and E911 surcharges. Dubuque County, Iowa, generates about \$500,000 each year from a \$1 monthly telephone surcharge on E911 services.

Lease Purchase Financing - A lease purchase agreement allows local agencies to get all of their equipment at one time with payment options such as deferred payment and biannual payments. As the agency makes payments, it builds interest in the leased equipment. At the end of the financing, the agency owns the equipment. Here in Indiana, Johnson County used this method to fund purchase of 911 equipment.

The federal government has money available in the form of grants (see "Click This," back page for a list of some of the grants available). Generally this money is not enough to fully fund equipment needs and requires applicants to match some of the money. Grants, however, can offset costs.

Motorola has grant specialists

available to help local safety professionals walk through the maze of grant funding. This is not a grant writing service but rather helps local consortiums identify grant sources for communication projects. For more information please contact Frank Galvin at 219-476-0102.

Private sector groups are starting to combine their resources with public entities for communications needs. These Public/Private Partnerships have many advantages. In South Carolina, one-third of the financing for interoperability comes from local governments, one-third from utility companies, and one-third from state agencies.

Foundations, endowments, direct solicitation, fund-raising events and corporate donations are also possible funding sources. It's worth investigating local sources, but funding in these areas is especially difficult in times of economic insecurity.

The common thread among all these funding sources is cooperation. When agencies work together, a great amount of duplication and excess is avoided, the bottom-line goal of Project Hoosier SAFE-T is realized -- ***Saving Lives and Saving Money.***

personnel write letters to the editor of your local newspapers. Inform the general public about the consequences of outdated, inefficient communications equipment. Use simple terms in easy-to-understand language.

Build relationships with the press/community -- As your plans develop, work with your elected officials to tell the story

in the local media. Mayors, city/county representatives and other elected officials need good press. When emergency response efforts are effective, the public's perception of elected officials is immediately enhanced. If the response is less than expected, the public will blame their elected officials. Build on this reality as you communicate your needs

to budget-makers!

These are just a few of the many tools available. For more help, call the Project Hoosier SAFE-T staff, 317.234.2572.

Click This!



Following is a list of some of the grant programs available for local entities:

Bureau of Justice Local Law Enforcement Block Grants
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/lleb_g_app.html
Making Officer Redeployment Effective (COPS MORE) Grants
<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/>
Office for Domestic Preparedness Equipment Grant Program
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/>
Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Technology Initiatives
http://it.ojp.gov/topic.jsp?topic_id=10
U.S. Fire Adm. Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program
<http://www.usfa.fema.gov/inside-usfa/grants.shtm>
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
<http://www.fema.gov/>
Justice Technology Information Network (JUSTNET)
<http://www.justnet.org/>
National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Funding Opportunities
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>
Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants.html>
United States Department of Justice (DOJ)
<http://www.usdoj.gov/10grants/index.html>

There are also several organizations whose sole purpose is the promote wireless interoperable communications for public safety professionals. One of these organizations -- the Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) has excellent publications on funding issues. Here are a few:

- ▶ Public Safety Communications Funding Awareness Guide
<http://www.publicsafetywins.gov/PolicySolutions/Funding/CommFundAwareGuide.pdf>
- ▶ A Priority Investment for America's Future <http://www.pswn.gov/admin/librarydocs6/priorityinvestment.pdf>
- ▶ Report on Funding Mechanisms for Public Safety Radio Communications <http://www.publicsafetywins.gov/PolicySolutions/Funding/fundmech.pdf>
- ▶ Report on Funding Strategies for Public Safety Radio Communications http://www.publicsafetywins.gov/PolicySolutions/Funding/fund_strats.pdf
- ▶ Land Mobile Radio (LMR) Replacement Cost Study Report http://www.publicsafetywins.gov/PolicySolutions/Funding/lmr_coststudy.pdf
- ▶ Cost Study Data Characterization Report http://www.pswn.gov/admin/librarydocs/csdc_rpt.pdf
- ▶ Report Card on Funding Mechanisms for Public Safety Funding Strategies for Public Safety Radio Communications http://www.pswn.gov/admin/librarydocs6/report_card_on_funding_mech.pdf
- ▶ Funding of Public Safety Wireless Communications Systems: Report of the Interagency Working Group
<http://www.publicsafetywins.gov/PolicySolutions/Funding/IWG.pdf>

SAFE-T in a Nutshell

SAFE-T is a statewide, interoperable, wireless public safety communications system for Indiana local, state, and federal first responders/public safety officials. SAFE-T operates on a Motorola 4.1 Astro Smartzone OmniLink 800 MHz trunked voice and data system. It supports both analog and digital radios, providing 95% mobile radio coverage statewide using 126 communications sites connected by T1 lines and microwave.

SAFE-T will allow seamless, interoperable and reliable communications among local, state, and federal public safety agencies during routine, emergency and task force situations. SAFE-T will strengthen community safety and security, minimize costs and barriers to communications, and break down regionalization of systems to combat crime, natural disaster and terrorism. SAFE-T was designed to include wide voluntary participation of public safety agencies/first responders while respecting local autonomy.

Project Hoosier SAFE-T
100 North Senate Avenue
Indiana Government Center North
Room N340
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

